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In Autumn

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON NES

In the mist I hear one singing clear and low,
An elegy of half-remembered griefs
Too deep for sorrow and too old for tears,
A wandering echo of old pain that haunts
The damp grey twilight, passionless, serene,
In perfect sadness, like Andromache
Remembering on an alien shore the dead.
It floats upon the wet leaves as they fall
In tattered shreds of crimson tapestry,
It wells within the cloisters of tall trunks
That loom in limitless dark colonnades
Through the moist curtain of the falling night;
It follows with the pang of Orpheus
The day deepening into darkness, as it would
Allure it into light again, and pours
Into each mellow moment a deep flow
Of endless lamentation.

I shall sit

Here on this hillside long eternities tonight,
Companion for thy solemn minstrelsy.
Sing me the loveliness of old Provence,
Moon-magic porticoes, and trellised walls,
Of courtly troubadours, and lyric loves
That now have passed into oblivion.
Out of the heart of darkness they shall come,
The glorious ones of Grecian myth, their plumes
Once more up-rising from the dusty past,
Their spirits quickened by our memory,
Like players moving noiselessly behind
A curtain,—presences invisible, but known
To the keen, unerring senses of the soul,—
They in the mist are passing silently;
While thou, the Chorus of their Tragedy,
Thine epic measures shall rehearse to me:
And I will share thine oral solitude
While we together ponder vanished years,
The mighty ancients and the grandeur of their dooms.